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Versions and Visions of the Alhambra in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman World

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The Alhambra as a source of inspiration for Western architects in the nineteenth century is well known and has been thoroughly documented. But “alhambresque” style was not just an Orientalist exoticism in the West. It was also used in Muslim contexts, where the style was considered suitable for public buildings—the entrance to the former Ministry of Defense building in Istanbul, for example—as well as for royal pavilions and palace interiors. In this article I explore the use of the alhambresque style in non-Western contexts in the nineteenth century, where “alhambresque” came to mean something more than simply fashionable exoticism.

“Alhambresque” refers to the style of architectural decoration and interior design inspired by depictions of the Alhambra palace from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were widely available through paintings, printed publications, plaster casts, and copies.¹ The term refers specifically to the Alhambra because it was from that building that artists, architects, and patrons derived the nineteenth-century style; the term came in particular from Owen Jones’s landmark publication *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, published in London between 1842 and 1845.² Jones (1809–74) was making serious points about design reform in Britain through his studies of the palace, but the alhambresque style that emerged and became so popular was more playful and superficial in mood than he perhaps intended. It involved copying key elements of the facades of the building—the distinctive neo-Nasrid capitals, the elongated multifoiled arches, the *muqarnas* (ornamental vaulting), and the *sebka* (interwoven lozenge) motifs—usually (for an interior) with the



Fig. 1
Edward Petrovich Hau
(1807–87), *Interiors of
the Winter Palace: The
Bathroom of Empress
Alexandra Fyodorovna*,
1870. Watercolor.
Hermitage Museum,
Saint Petersburg.

bright colors that, he argued, had covered the original building. The style was used either to create entire rooms or to give an Oriental flavor to a facade or an interior. At the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg, for example, the bathroom of Prussian-born Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna (1798–1860) was designed as a miniature Alhambra room, furnished complete with replica Alhambra vases (1839; fig. 1). In London, Matthew Digby Wyatt (1820–77) designed a “Moorish Billiard Room” (1866) for a house at 12 Kensington Palace Gardens based upon his study of Jones’s work.³

The vision of an unchanging and silent Orient that was created in many ways in Western salons and studios fits perfectly into Edward Said’s well-known discourse

on Orientalism.⁴ In this paradigm, the Alhambra was the source of historic Oriental architectural styles that were digested, interpreted, and displayed for a contemporary Western audience. The use of the alhambresque in the East—in the Ottoman world—could therefore simply be understood as the absorption and reproduction of these Orientalist images by the westernized Ottoman rulers of the second half of the nineteenth century; it could be seen as a kind of “Ottoman Orientalism,” to use Ussama Makdisi’s formulation.⁵ Khedive Isma’il’s Gezira Palace, discussed below, might be taken as an example, although my purpose here is to examine the more complex meanings associated with the style in non-Western contexts.

How and where the alhambresque was used in Istanbul, the Ottoman capital, shows us that the style was also adopted as part of a wider concern among post-Tanzimat intellectuals to identify and define an authentic Ottoman architectural style at a time when it was not yet clear exactly what that might be. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, graduates from the new School of Architecture at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul had begun to reject the use of European styles in architecture and had called for what they considered a more authentic and local style.⁶ Meanwhile, a document on preferred architectural styles that was written for the Istanbul Agricultural and Industrial Exposition planned for Istanbul in 1894 (and cancelled because of the earthquake of the same year) criticized the use of contemporary European styles in Ottoman contexts. In a letter to Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1893, Said Pasha, a member of the organizing committee for the exposition, recommended that “the exhibition should be a vehicle for promoting an Arab style of architecture, different from those clumsy [European-style] buildings erected in the previous two centuries.”⁷ The preferred styles at that time were identified as “Ottoman, Arabic or Moorish,” so the choice was between generic European and generic Islamic.⁸ Within this paradigm, the alhambresque—filtered through reproductions by Western artists and architects, colored as Owen Jones prescribed, and designated by an Ottoman sultan or khedive for his royal buildings—could now be included among acceptable *local* styles by architects in Istanbul and Cairo. By appropriating the Western alhambresque and using it alongside other historic styles, its patrons were also promoting a sense of visual continuity with an idealized period from the Islamic past within the context of the rapid and often bewildering westernization of Ottoman political, economic, and urban structures.

Studies of Orientalist architecture tend to focus on the Western (European and North American) representations of the East and occasionally on the East’s resistance to these Western ways of seeing the East. Makdisi in his study of Ottoman Orientalism highlights the lack of writing about representations of otherness as strategies of resistance and empowerment within non-Western societies.⁹ My examination of non-Western examples of the alhambresque aims to refute the silent status often accorded to Islam in Western discourse by revealing a more complex story of Orientalist-style architecture and design in the nineteenth century than is often told.

“Alhambresque” versus “Moorish”

Before exploring the non-Western examples of the alhambresque style, I will clarify what is meant by “alhambresque” and explain why the term “Moorish” is not suitable in this context.

Like the alhambresque architectural style, the history of the two stylistic terms is a noticeably Western story. Although the words “alhambresque” and “Moorish” derive, respectively, from the Arabic “al-hamra” (meaning “the red”) and the Greek “mauros” (meaning “dark” or “black”), their adjectival forms describing a particular style were coined in the West. For “Moorish” (English), “mauresque” (French), “maurisch” (German), and “morisco” (Spanish) there is no real Arabic equivalent.¹⁰

The history and meaning of the term “Moorish” has been explored elsewhere, but in its narrowest sense it refers to the style derived from the art and architecture of North Africa and al-Andalus (Islamic Spain).¹¹ In *The Grammar of Ornament*, Jones calls his designs from the Alhambra “Moresque Ornament,” which he explains as being the ornament of the Moors that he takes exclusively from his studies of the Alhambra (he also uses the English term “moorish” and notes the German “maurisch”).¹²

In more recent times, however, “Moorish” has lost its particular resonance with the art of al-Andalus and North Africa and has come at times to be almost synonymous with “Orientalist” in its description of architectural style. Miles Danby in his book *Moorish Style* acknowledges the narrower geographical meaning of the term as referring to the regions of North Africa and al-Andalus but defines “Moorish style” as “a Western concept . . . a style derived from Islamic design elements found in countries ranging from Spain, in the West, to Mughal India, in the East.”¹³ “Moorish” is also frequently used to describe the art from all periods of Islamic rule in North Africa and in Spain—it includes the style of the mosques of Córdoba and Kairouan, for example, with their distinctive horseshoe-shaped arches.

By contrast, the term “alhambresque” refers specifically to the style of architecture, inspired largely by depictions of the Alhambra palace, that was popularized in the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁴ The history of the use of the term makes this association with nineteenth-century versions of the Alhambra clear. It is found in the 1867 French novel *Manette Salomon* by the Goncourt brothers, which is about artists and models in Paris and their working-class lives. The novel’s protagonists follow a Jewish model (Manette) through the city streets only to find themselves in “une espèce de cloître *Alhambresque*” (an alhambresque courtyard), revealed to be that of the Nazarene synagogue, the first alhambresque-style synagogue in Paris (completed in 1852 by the architect Alexandre Thierry).¹⁵ Indeed, the title “Alhambresque” that accompanies a piece of woven silk in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection offers the possibility that the term may have been used as early as the 1850s in relation to a British-made design inspired by Owen Jones’s plates in the 1856 edition of his *Grammar of Ornament*.¹⁶

The Western Origins of the Alhambresque

The Alhambra palace complex in Granada, in southern Spain, was largely built by the Islamic Nasrid dynasty of al-Andalus in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Following the Christian conquest of Granada in 1492, it became the seat of Spain’s Catholic monarchs Ferdinand II and Isabella I, but in subsequent centuries it fell into disrepair as royal power moved north to Madrid. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Alhambra had entered European consciousness as the ultimate in exotic palaces. Its place on the tourist map was assured, particularly for visitors from Britain, France, Germany, and the United States.¹⁷ Countless artists painted it; travelers circulated postcards and photographs of it; operas and instrumental music had Alhambra themes; and many contemporary novels and historical and travelers’ tales had the palace as a subject.¹⁸ Adolf Friedrich von Schack’s *Poesie und Kunst der Araber in Spanien und Sicilien* (Stuttgart, 1877) was especially influential among German tourists.¹⁹ Richard Ford’s *Handbook for Travellers in Spain and Readers at Home* (1845) was popular in Britain. Washington Irving’s stories in *Tales of the Alhambra* (originally published in 1832) immortalized the palace as an exotic place of dark maidens hiding inside fairy-tale turrets.²⁰

The palace’s architectural details (decoration and color in particular) were readily accessible even to architects and patrons who had never set foot in Granada. This was largely due to the work of Owen Jones, whose publications were crucial in the formation of an alhambresque style in contemporary architecture and interior design and whose published designs enabled architects and patrons to imagine a finished product (figs. 2–3).²¹ In addition to the printed publications that reproduced two-dimensional images from the building, plaster casts and scaled-down copies of the palace facades were distributed among European museums and schools of design for the education of future architects and designers.²² Jones supervised the building of a version of the Alhambra’s Court of the Lions for the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, England, in 1854 (fig. 4), and Carl von Diebitsch (1819–60) submitted his “Maurische Kiosk,” inspired by his extended study of the Alhambra, for the Prussian entry to the 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris.²³

The alhambresque as an architectural style was born out of these versions and visions of the building, these two- and three-dimensional as well as imaginary evocations of the palace, in which the interiors were re-created in the full color that was made so popular by Jones. The style became particularly suited in the West to a certain kind of temporary and to some extent frivolous architecture of mostly wealthy patrons. It was popular for garden pavilions and domestic smoking rooms. Alexandre Dumas, for example, had a “Moorish” salon and smoking room in his Renaissance-style Chateau de Monte-Cristo outside Paris as early as 1847. Though installed by craftsmen from Tunisia whom Dumas had encountered on one of his voyages, the room was almost certainly inspired by Jones.²⁴ Besides in these domestic recreational spaces, Moorish-style interiors were also found in theaters and bathhouses—liminal spaces where risqué and transgressive behavior could be tolerated and even celebrated in a decorative style that reflected its acceptance. The choice of alhambresque was not ideologically

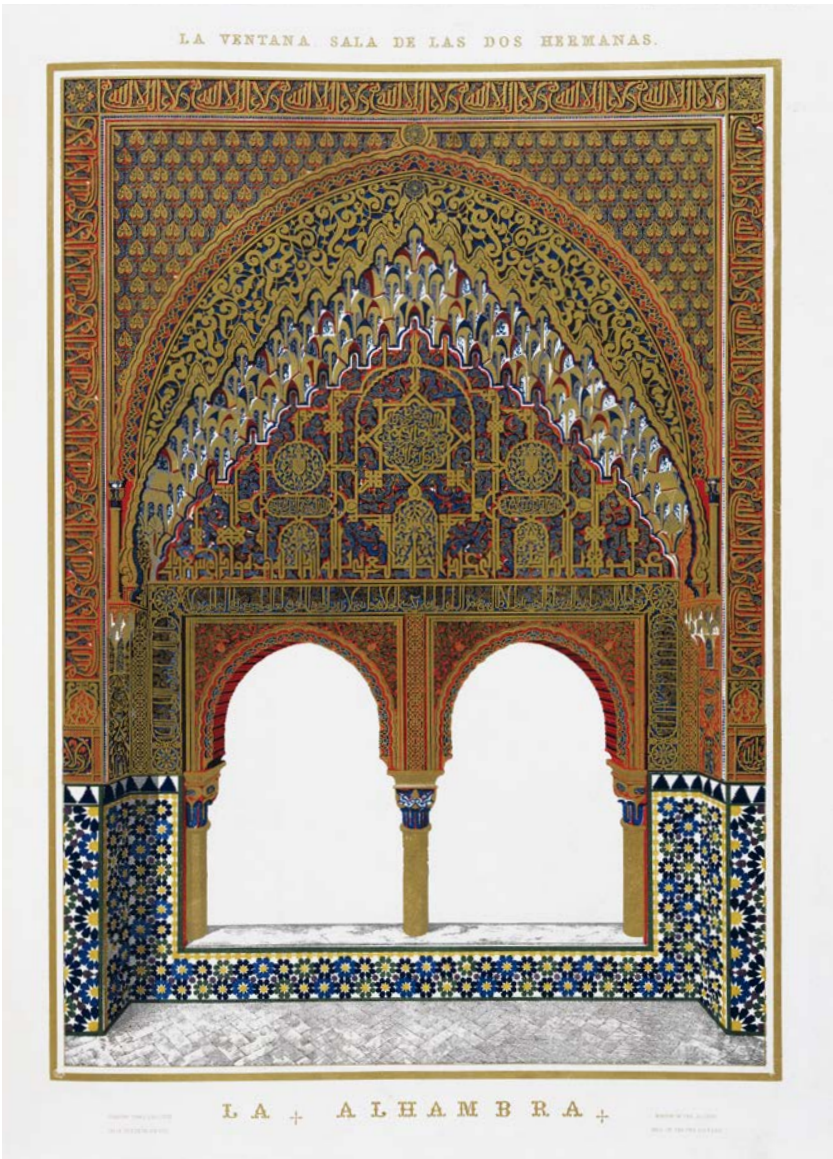


Fig. 2
Owen Jones (1809–74), *Window from the Hall of the Two Sisters*. Chromolithographic plate on paper. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Reproduced from Owen Jones, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra* (London: Owen Jones, 1842–45).

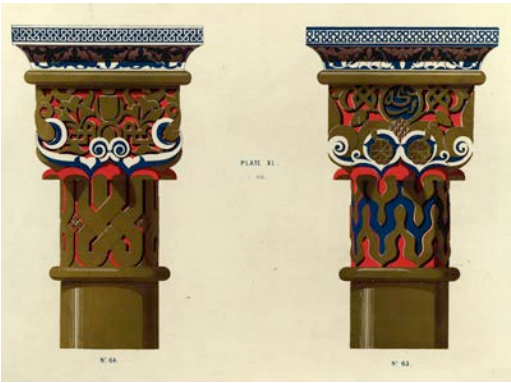


Fig. 3
The Alhambra: detail of colored capitals. Chromolithographic plate on paper. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Reproduced from Owen Jones, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, vol. 2, plate XL.

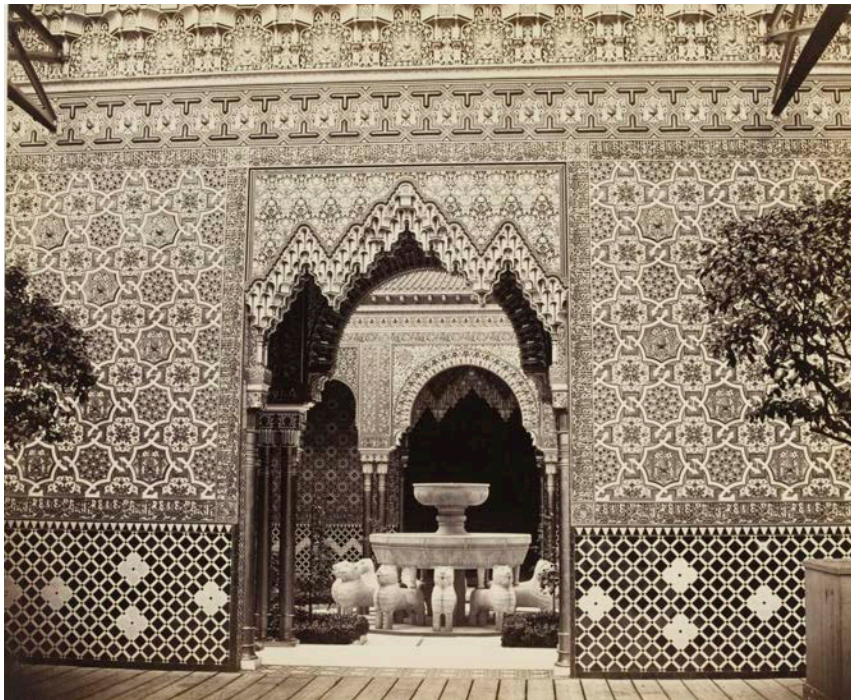


Fig. 4
Philip Henry Delamotte
(1821–89), *The Alhambra
Court: Crystal Palace*,
c. 1859. Albumen print.
Victoria and Albert
Museum, London.

innocent but part of a long-held association of the Orient with indolence, luxury, and grandeur. In the West the alhambresque style was not used for buildings with a serious function—governmental ministries, museums, or hospitals, for example. Claudia Heide describes how British architects in the nineteenth century “translated” the Alhambra according to the latest fashions and demands of the Western market, dismantling its parts and remaking it as an “exotic abode” in the smoking rooms and theaters of Western consumers. As she points out, “Clichés of the oriental are maintained here, and there can be no doubt that many looked to the Alhambra as an excuse for indulgent behaviour.”²⁵

In Cairo and Istanbul, the alhambresque was used for pleasure pavilions and domestic smoking rooms too. But unlike in the West, the style was also used for serious imperial commissions. At a time when an ideological choice apparently had to be made between the European style favored in previous decades and an emerging historicist style of indigenous architecture, the alhambresque could be identified as an Arab style.

The Alhambresque in Cairo

Perhaps the most well-known example of the use of alhambresque in an Islamic context is the Gezira Palace in Cairo. The enthronement of Khedive Isma’il as viceroy in 1863 (r. 1863–79) and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 provided the impetus for an unprecedented building program in Cairo during the 1860s. Under the direction of his minister of public works, Ali Pasha Mubarak,

trained in engineering in Paris, the khedive commissioned vast new building projects, including the development of entire new areas of Cairo in a style modeled on that of Haussmann’s Paris. This construction in areas such as Azbakiyya, Isma’ilya, and al-Jazirah was part of a wider program of westernization in Khedive Isma’il’s Egypt, in which the government itself was remodeled along British lines. In 1882 Egypt became a de facto British protectorate, and thereafter French, German, and British firms were awarded contracts for everything from providing lighting and municipal water to building railways and bridges.²⁶

As Robert Ilbert, Mercedes Volait, and others have documented, there was a widespread vogue in the late decades of the nineteenth century among wealthy patrons in Egypt to employ European architects to build villas, palaces, and public buildings in a mix of historicist and eclectic styles.²⁷ Part of this building program was the khedive’s new Gezira Palace in the Zamalek section of Cairo, which was built to house the visiting monarchs attending the receptions and public events celebrating the opening of the Suez Canal. The most famous and highly regarded representative of European royalty was the wife of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, Empress Eugénie, whose presence and every appearance were reported in both the local and international press.²⁸ The palace of Gezira was set within landscaped gardens that included a zoo. At the opening, guests heard the first performance of Verdi’s opera *Aida* and visited the pyramids at Giza along a newly paved road.²⁹ The khedive employed renowned European architects for the important palace-building commission: the German architect Julius Franz was to design the Gezira Palace; Owen Jones was to decorate the interiors in alhambresque style; and the Prussian architect Carl von Diebitsch was to add an alhambresque-style portico to the otherwise neoclassical structure of the palace, as well as build a monumental garden kiosk in a similar style, to lend the palace a suitably festive air (fig. 5).³⁰



Fig. 5
J. Pascal Sébah
(1823–86), *Historic
View of the Gezira
Palace Kiosk Facade*,
Cairo (now destroyed),
1870s. Albumen print.
Courtesy of Special
Collections, Fine
Arts Library, Harvard
University.

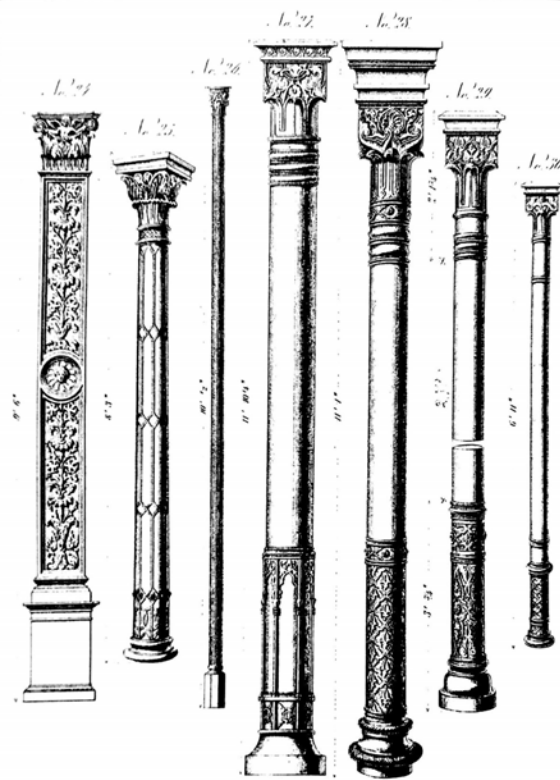
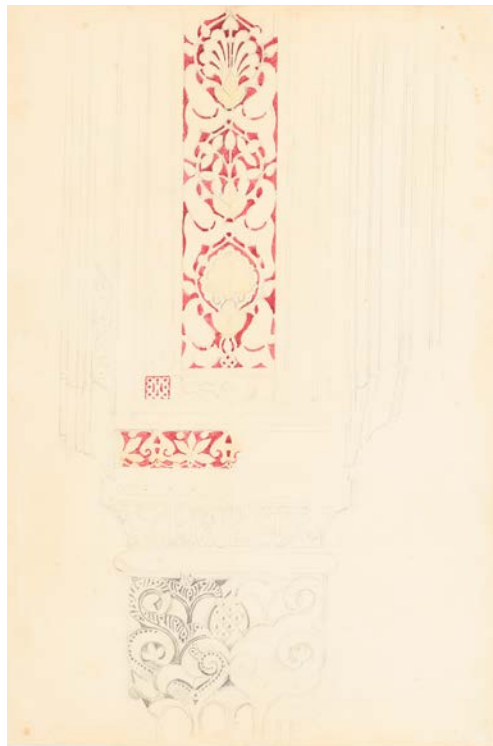
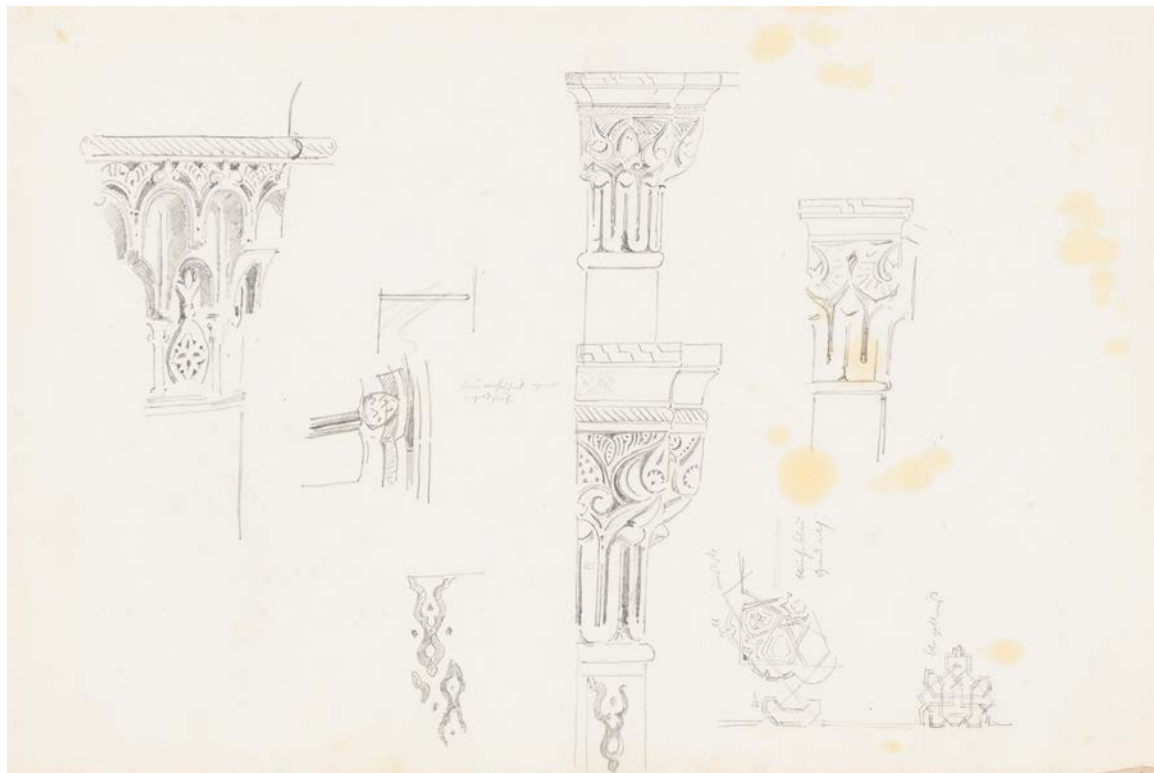


Fig. 6
Carl von Diebitsch (1819–69).
Study of Nasrid Capitals, Floral and Geometric Motifs from the Alhambra, Granada, 1846–47. Pencil on card. Architekturmuseum, Technische Universität Berlin.

Fig. 7
Carl von Diebitsch, *Study of Floral Motifs and Capitals at the Alhambra, Granada, 1846–47.* Pencil and watercolor on card. Architekturmuseum, Technische Universität Berlin.

Fig. 8
Drawings of cast-iron columns with alhambresque capitals designed by Carl von Diebitsch, available for purchase from the Lauchhammer foundry. *Lauchhammer Pattern Book*, no. 28 (c. 1870), plate 59.

Carl von Diebitsch at the Gezira Palace

Khedive Isma'il had no particular allegiance to the alhambresque style, and he did not choose it for the many other buildings he erected as part of the “building mania” of the 1860s.³¹ He chose the alhambresque and, more specifically, chose Jones and Diebitsch because they were fashionable architects working on important commissions and writing for prominent publications in Europe. During his visits to London and Paris in 1867, he would have visited both Jones’s version of the Court of the Lions at the Crystal Palace and Diebitsch’s “Maurische Kiosk” at the Exposition Universelle. The khedive gave £500 to finance the rebuilding of the Alhambra court at Sydenham after it had been partially destroyed in a fire in 1866.³²

Diebitsch had studied the Alhambra palace during an extended stay in Granada in 1846–47; he had drawn its details with precision, noted the traces of colors, and made wet-paper “squeeze” impressions of the facades (figs. 6–7). He was keen to apply the designs he had copied at the Alhambra to mass production; on his return to Berlin he employed the Lauchhammer foundry near Dresden to fabricate cast-iron columns with neo-Nasrid capitals copied from his detailed drawings or from casts of the originals. These were featured in the catalogue of the foundry (fig. 8), used in the Gezira Palace, and offered for sale to whoever wished to purchase them—a kind of do-it-yourself Alhambra for every German bourgeois home.³³

Diebitsch met members of the Egyptian aristocracy at the 1862 International Exhibition in London, which led to important commissions in Alexandria and Cairo—a villa for the German banker Henry Oppenheim; a staircase for Muhammad Sharif Pasha, the son of an Ottoman *qadi* educated in France; and a mausoleum for Sulayman Pasha, commissioned by Sharif Pasha for his father-in-law.³⁴

These commissions would have impressed the khedive, who commissioned Diebitsch to design a room for his Gezira Palace in 1863, with the promise of further commissions in the palace should he be successful. Diebitsch eventually designed the rooms in the north wing as well as the palace porticoes and a garden kiosk, all of which were fabricated in Germany and sent to Egypt by train and boat (fig. 9). Diebitsch’s interior decoration and furniture for the palace have not survived, but a collection of seventeen pieces of furniture designed by Diebitsch in an Oriental style, probably intended for his Maurische Haus in Berlin (1856–57, demolished), has survived and gives an impression of how the rooms at Gezira may have been furnished when they were completed (fig. 10).³⁵

Owen Jones at the Gezira Palace

It may have been when the khedive visited the Crystal Palace that he commissioned Owen Jones to design the interiors for fifteen of the rooms at his new palace. The two had almost certainly met earlier, however; the *Illustrated London News* printed a drawing of a carriage that Jones had designed for the khedive in 1856.³⁶ Jones designed furniture, carpets, draperies, cornices, dadoes, dado moldings, friezes, frieze moldings, and wallpaper for the rooms. A writer for the *Builder* remarked that “Mr Jones regarded [this commission]



Fig. 9
Carl von Diebitsch, *Design Sketch for the Interior of a Palace for the Khedive of Egypt at Gezira, Cairo, c. 1863–64*. Pencil on card. Architekturmuseum, Technische Universität Berlin.

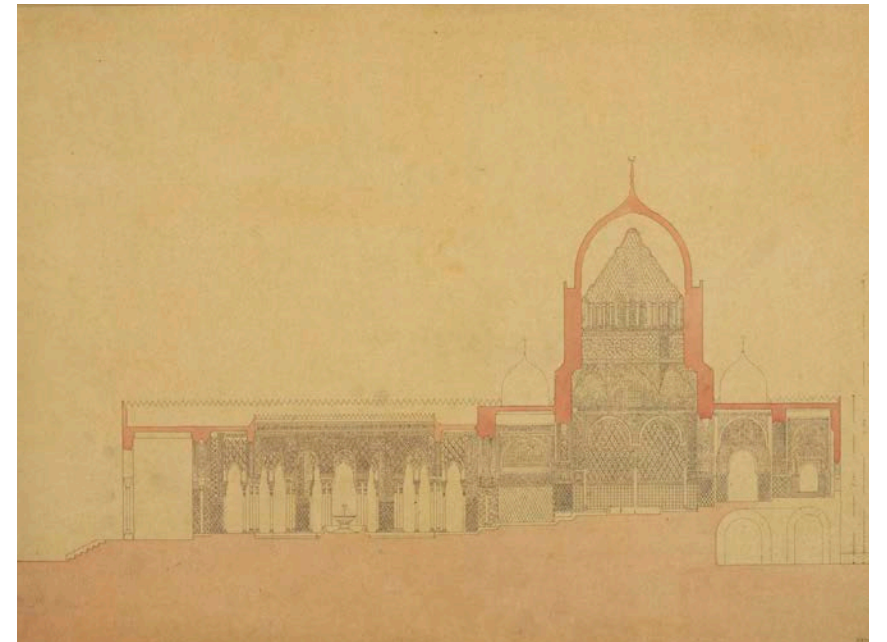


Fig. 11
Owen Jones, *Section View of the Design for a Garden Pavilion for the Khedive of Egypt, 1861*. Pen and watercolor on paper. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

both physically and mentally as the greatest triumph of his life. For three months, day by day, he worked not less than eighteen hours upon it.”³⁷ Like Diebitsch, Jones had everything made in England and shipped to Cairo. The wallpaper was made by Jeffrey and Company, the furniture by the London firm of Jackson and Graham.³⁸

The whereabouts of the drawings and designs for these items are not known. What remains of Jones’s work on the Gezira Palace can be seen in the wall and ceiling decoration of what is now the Marriott Hotel in Zamalek. Some drawings by Jones that do survive seem to show a design for Alhambra-style garden pavilions; some are labeled “VPC”—possibly for “Viceroy’s Palace Cairo”—which suggests that he was designing more buildings, perhaps garden pavilions, for the palace (fig. 11). There is no evidence that these further pavilions were ever built.³⁹

The choice of alhambresque for the decoration of the Gezira Palace was appropriate for the celebratory and festive occasion for which it was planned. The palace was, to all intents and purposes, a stage set on which the Western world could witness the cosmopolitan taste of the Egyptian ruler. Western architects, chosen by the khedive, designed it to showcase the exoticism of the Muslim world and to impress the West. After ceding financial control of Egypt to the Anglo-French in 1879, the khedive, a Parisian-educated Europhile, was pleased to announce, “My country is no longer in Africa; we are now part of Europe.” For the world’s biggest party, to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal, the khedive was providing the European elite—in particular, his guest of honor, Empress Eugénie—with just the kind of Islamic palace that they had come to expect and with which they were now more or less familiar. Shortly



Fig. 10
Carl von Diebitsch, *Two side tables designed for his Maurische Haus, Berlin, c. 1850*. Wood, 47.5 × 39 × 37 cm each. Staatliches Museum Schwerin/Ludwigslust/Güstrow. Photograph: Gabriele Bröcker.

after arriving at Gezira in 1869, Eugénie wrote to her husband, Louis-Napoléon: “Cairo has conserved its ancient cachet . . . which for me recalls Spain. The dances, the music and the food are identical.”⁴⁰

But the alhambresque can also be seen in the light of a more general trend to use “neo-Arabic”-style motifs in, and mostly on, buildings in Cairo during the latter half of the nineteenth century—motifs drawn from a widely Moorish repertoire. Alhambresque features such as elongated multifoiled arches, neo-Nasrid capitals, and *sebka* motifs were freely applied to the facades of private houses and public buildings.⁴¹ Many of these edifices were demolished after the 1920s, often to make room for large apartment blocks. But some survive, including the *sabil-kuttab* of the Bab al-Hadid in Cairo (1870) by the Italian architect Ciro Pantonelli (1833–84), with its distinctive elongated arches in a double-height arcade.⁴² Ilbert and Volait describe the proliferation in Egypt of what they call the “Arabic style,” which incorporated alhambresque features. From around 1870 to 1910 it was one of the most popular styles among the many different and eclectic styles deployed in the “building fever” of Cairo. This trend was, on the one hand, the material expression of a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie and, on the other, the expression of a search for a suitable architectural form for the new buildings of modern Cairo.⁴³ The alhambresque offered a kind of authenticity through its link with the architecture of al-Andalus, combined with a certain legitimacy as a contemporary style popular in European capitals, in a period of rapid westernization in urban Cairo.

Istanbul and Sultan Abdülaziz

In Istanbul, architects were similarly experimenting with alhambresque forms and motifs before the introduction of indigenous revivalist styles at the turn of the twentieth century. It was under the patronage of Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861–76) that the largest number of surviving examples of alhambresque design in Istanbul were constructed, and it was probably under his rule that the style was first introduced. It is likely, too, that he personally was responsible for the style. He took a close interest in his building projects, even directly approving and altering designs presented to him by architects.⁴⁴ He was known for his interest in both traditional Ottoman and European arts; he practiced traditional calligraphy as well as European-style painting, knew Arabic and Persian, and even composed Western-style classical music.⁴⁵ He probably met Owen Jones during his trip to London in 1867, when he contributed £1,000 toward the rebuilding of the Alhambra court at the Crystal Palace following its destruction in a fire.⁴⁶

The sultan’s building program and his use of alhambresque elements on Western-style structures can be understood only in the context of the pro-Western Tanzimat reforms of 1839–76. The Tanzimat reforms to the administrative and civil structures—the “ordering” of the empire inaugurated with the Gülhane decree of 1839—were attempts by the Ottoman reformers to modernize the empire along European lines by looking to Western institutions and intellectual systems as solutions to Ottoman problems.⁴⁷ During the first

half of the nineteenth century, individuals in imperial circles expressed a lack of confidence in traditional Ottoman building styles; they had a sense that European cities and their ways of building were superior and should be copied. In 1836 Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid, Ottoman diplomat and chief architect of the Tanzimat reforms, wrote to Sultan Mahmud II from London calling the sultan’s attention to criticisms in the European press of the many fires in Istanbul and the practice of building in wood. Reşid recommended taking advantage of the clearances of the city by fire to replan Istanbul along European and specifically Parisian lines. He recommended “laying out streets according to the rules of geometry, levelling certain places as far as possible,” and building “in a new style and attractive shape.”⁴⁸ The chief of staff of the Prussian army, Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke (1800–1891), who was charged with reorganizing the Ottoman army for the sultan, was commissioned to make a new topographical plan of Istanbul and to suggest citywide schemes to widen roads, improve communications, and create public squares; his plan was implemented by imperial decree in 1839.⁴⁹ Reşid, in his recommendations to the sultan, had suggested sending local men to study architecture in the West but meanwhile employing Western architects to work in Istanbul.⁵⁰ Members of the Armenian Balyan family of architects, among others, were sent to Paris to receive an architectural education—Nikolos Karapeti Balyan (1826–58) went to Collège Sainte-Barbe in Paris—while Italian, French, and German architects were invited by the sultan to design new building projects for the imperial courts. This was the case until the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts was established in Istanbul in 1881 as a place where Ottomans could receive a Western-style education in architecture and its theoretical discourse.⁵¹

Western architectural styles had thus been favored for important political buildings for most of the century, and a system of architectural education based on the Western Beaux-Arts style had already been introduced when ideas about Ottoman identity and its expression through architectural styles began to surface. *Usul-i Mi’mari-i ‘Osmani / L’architecture ottomane / Die ottomanische Baukunst*, published in Istanbul for the Vienna Exposition Universelle of 1873 by imperial command, was the first state-sponsored publication that attempted to situate Ottoman architecture within a historical and aesthetic framework.⁵² Written under the direction of the Ottoman minister of education, Ibrahim Edhem Pasha (1818–93), it was produced collectively by a group of Ottoman and French architects, artists, and administrators and edited by the historian and artist Marie de Launay. Through this prestigious trilingual publication the authors aimed to codify an “Ottoman architectural style” for both an international and a local audience, to redefine the Ottoman building tradition as a flexible and modern one that was compatible with contemporary Western academic norms, and to establish the legitimacy of the style through a newly nationalistic ideology that placed Ottoman architecture—and by extension its character and identity—on a par with that of the West.⁵³

Usul provides one of the first examples of an internal discourse on Islamic art and architecture in the Ottoman world. In the context of the alhambresque, however, it demonstrates an increasing desire on the part of Ottoman nationals to be seen to use non-Western native forms. The authors of *Usul* blamed

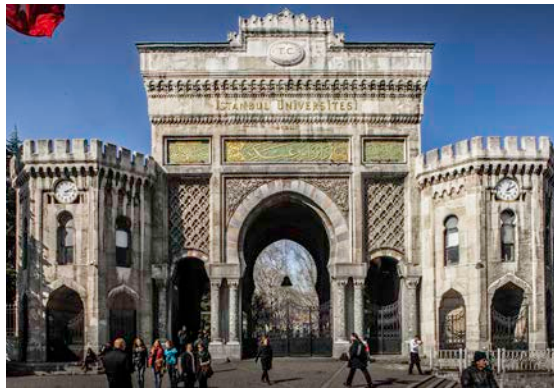


Fig. 12
Auguste Bourgeois (1821–84), Entrance gate to the former Harbiye Nezareti (Ministry of Defense headquarters), now the main gate to the University of Istanbul, built in 1865. Photograph: Murat Durusoy.



Fig. 13
Auguste Bourgeois, Kiosk flanking the entrance to the former Harbiye Nezareti, now the Professor's House, University of Istanbul, designed c. 1865. Photograph: Murat Durusoy.

the influence of French architects and engineers for what they perceived as a loss of purity in Ottoman architecture, and called for a renaissance of native Ottoman architectural forms. Ottoman architectural forms had not yet been fully systematized for use in such revivalist architecture, so a hybrid “Orientalizing” idiom that included the alhambresque style that available through Western publications and examples, was employed as a substitute for the native idiom. Ahmet Ersoy demonstrates how these Ottoman intellectuals of the late nineteenth century appropriated the aesthetics of Orientalism to articulate a growing interest in the medieval past, which they identified as a golden age in Islamic history and promoted as the source of Ottoman identity. Through museum displays, restored Ottoman monuments, paintings (like those with medieval settings by the Ottoman artist Osman Hamdi Bey), theater productions, literature, and, crucially and most publicly, the design of new buildings, a vision of an idealized Islamic past within an Ottoman present was promoted and made available for the Ottoman public.⁵⁴ The alhambresque style suited because it was both familiar, given the European-style eclecticism favored by Western-educated architects and their patrons, and recognizably Islamic enough to be part of the new historicism.

The Entrance to the Harbiye Nezareti (c. 1865)

Sultan Abdülaziz was patron of the only surviving example of alhambresque style on a building in the public domain in Istanbul, built as an entrance to the

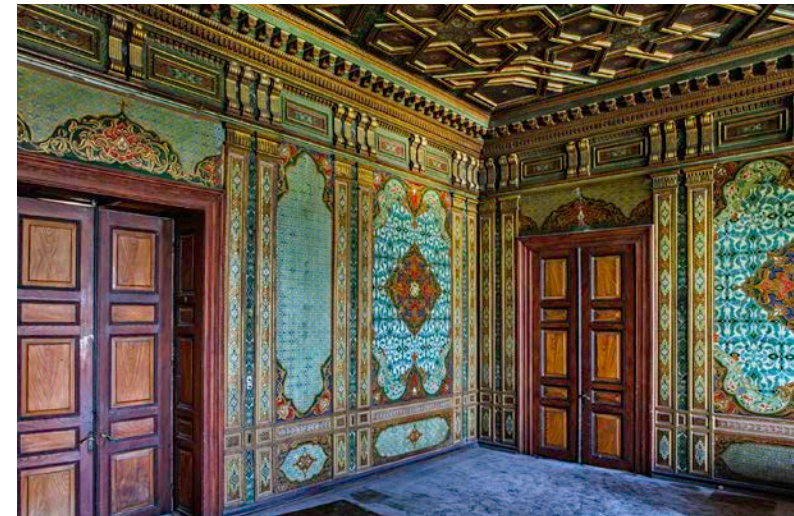


Fig. 14
Interior hall in the kiosk flanking the entrance to the former Harbiye Nezareti with decorative schemes in alhambresque and Ottoman styles, c. 1865. Photograph: Murat Durusoy.

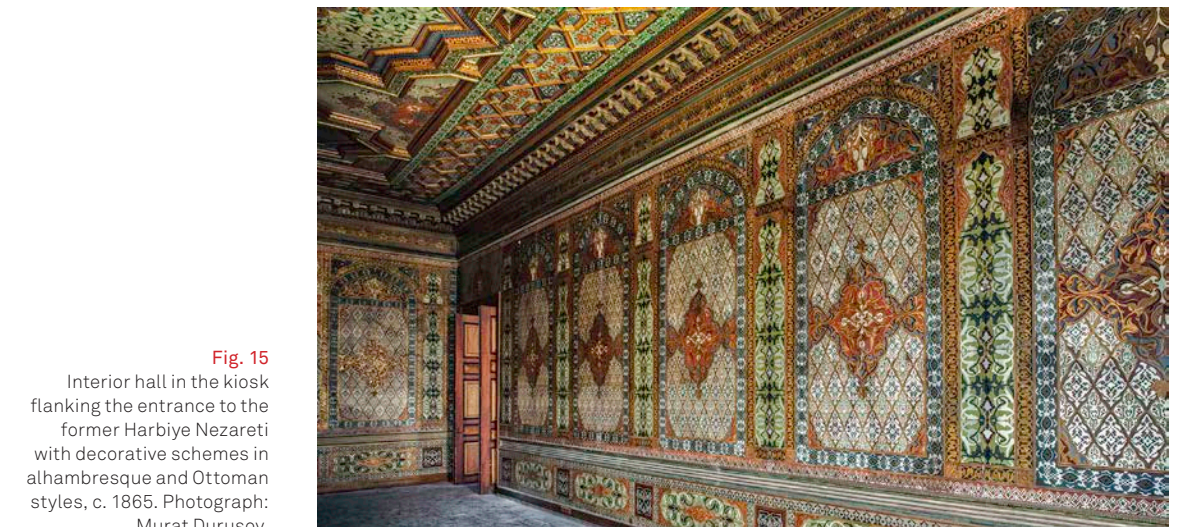


Fig. 15
Interior hall in the kiosk flanking the entrance to the former Harbiye Nezareti with decorative schemes in alhambresque and Ottoman styles, c. 1865. Photograph: Murat Durusoy.

Harbiye Nezareti (Ministry of Defense headquarters) at Beyazit Square. This triumphal arch flanked by two kiosks has since 1933 served as the Main Gate, Professor's House, and Rector's Building for Istanbul University (figs. 12–13). The sultan commissioned the building from the French eclectic architect Auguste Bourgeois, (who had designed the Ottoman exhibition building, with facades in a broadly neo-Islamic style, at the Sergi-i Umumi-i Osmani [Ottoman General Exhibition] in 1863).⁵⁵ The *sebka* motifs in the recesses above the triple arches and *mugarnas* in the upper registers of the central arch and side arches refer to motifs from the Alhambra, which were almost certainly added by Bourgeois, though not through direct experience of the Alhambra but through the publications of Owen Jones.⁵⁶ The main reception rooms and halls in the kiosks, one of which is now the Doctorate Hall of the University of Istanbul, are decorated with painted wood paneling and wallpaper inspired by the colors and motifs of Jones's *Grammar of Ornament* (figs. 14–15).

Turgut Saner has demonstrated that the structures of the kiosks that flank the arch were modeled on the fifteenth-century Çinili Köşk (Tiled Pavilion) of the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul.⁵⁷ This quotation of both a well-known early Ottoman building and the Alhambra palace in the facade details is typical of the architectural eclecticism and medieval historicism favored during this late Tanzimat period. By providing a stylistic link with these historical buildings from a glorified period in Islamic history on an official building in a prominent public space that was intimately connected with Ottoman military power and political legitimacy, the patron and his architect demonstrate the attempt to articulate a visual continuity within an imperial building between the contemporary regime and an idealized period in the Islamic past.⁵⁸

Abdülaziz’s Palaces

Sultan Abdülaziz also favored the alhambresque for the internal decoration of two palaces he built along the Bosphorus: the Beylerbeyi and the Çiragan. He ordered the reconstruction of the Beylerbeyi Palace by the Balyan family in 1863; the previous wooden palace had burned down in 1851. The new palace, on the eastern side of the Bosphorus, was completed in 1864, in time for the visit of Empress Eugénie, who stayed here in 1869 on her way to the opening of the Suez Canal.⁵⁹ The sultan had not been invited to the khedive’s party for the Suez Canal, so many heads of state made a point of visiting him first in Istanbul as a matter of courtesy. Eugénie was received by the sultan with a huge military parade, which the sultan and the empress watched from a pavilion made of gold and silver cloth, which was apparently afterwards burned in her honor. The whole fifteen-mile length of the Bosphorus was illuminated by lamps and bonfires and lined with twelve thousand infantrymen. The cannon of the naval fleet saluted her when she left the palace.⁶⁰

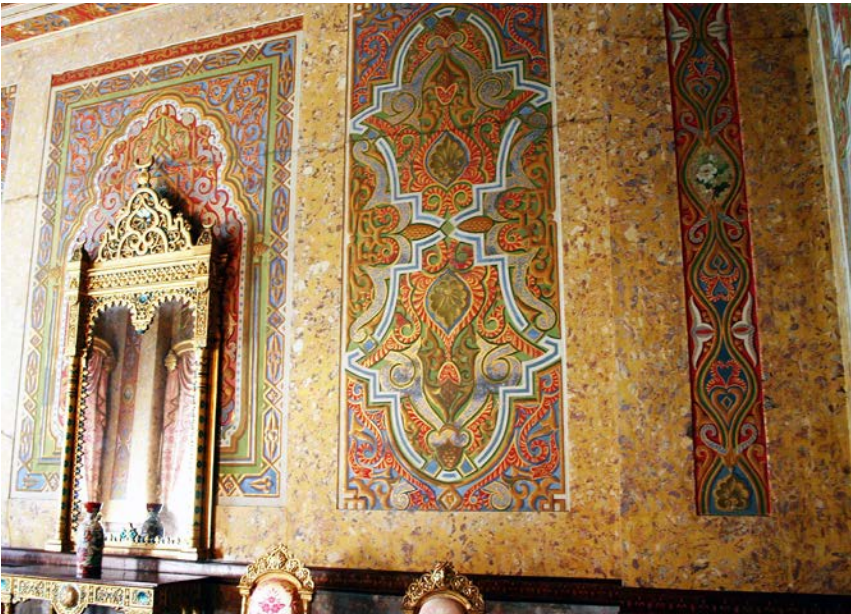


Fig. 16
Beylerbeyi Palace (1864),
Beylerbeyi Istanbul: Interior
wall decoration in the style
of Owen Jones. Photograph:
Alyson Wharton.

Beylerbeyi Palace is decorated in a mix of mostly baroque styles, but the main hall on the ground and upper stories features prominent alhambresque motifs. These are found in the wall and ceiling decorations of the first-floor hall, where the floral and vegetal motifs are very close to those in Jones’s *Grammar of Ornament* (fig. 16). The neo-Nasrid capitals of false columns in the upper hall and marble columns in the lower hall are also clearly alhambresque.

Alhambresque was also the dominant style for the interior decoration for the imperial Çiragan Palace (begun in 1857, completed in 1871). Abdülaziz employed Nigogos Karapeti Balyan (c. 1857) and Sarkis Karapeti Balyan and his brother Hakob (c. 1871) to build this palace on the western side of the Bosphorus to replace the former wooden Old Çiragan Palace built by Kirkor Balyan in 1829–32.⁶¹ Unlike previous generations of the Balyan family, who built palaces in the traditional Ottoman style, Nigogos and Sarkis Balyan had studied architecture at the Collège Sainte-Barbe in Paris, and they returned in 1845 with a knowledge of European styles, which they used at the Beylerbeyi and Çiragan Palaces.⁶² Pars Tuğlaci reports that Abdülaziz wanted his new Çiragan Palace to be built in “Arab style” as a memorial to his reign. The result was a European-style single building (rather than a mix of kiosks and pavilions, as at the Topkapı Palace), with an eclectic mix of gothic, neoclassical, and alhambresque details in the decoration and facades.⁶³ With this “Arab style” in mind, Hakob Balyan reportedly sent artists to Spain and North Africa to draw the buildings there in preparation for the building of the palace. Although further details on who these artists were or what they saw have not been recorded, the idea that artists should be sent to Spain rather than across the Ottoman world in search of an authentic Arab style suggests that al-Andalus—despite having long been under Christian rule—was seen as a place where a certain authenticity of architectural style was preserved and from which a new kind of Islamic Ottoman style could emerge.⁶⁴

Alhambresque decoration dominated the interior of the main halls of the palace. There were *muqarnas*, multifoiled arches, neo-Nasrid capitals on clusters of columns, pointed-arch niches, and primary-colored wall decoration—all associated with the Alhambra since the publication of Owen Jones’s book. In particular, the ceremonial throne hall on the upper first floor overlooking the Bosphorus featured clusters of slender columns with neo-Nasrid-style capitals supporting ornate elongated arches colored with bright golds, blues, and greens. Echoing the Court of the Lions in the Alhambra, the most celebrated and reproduced part of the Nasrid palaces, these columns, clustered in groups of fours and twos, enclosed a central rectangular space, which was at a slightly lower level. The architects were not simply filling in spaces with details from Jones’s popular lexicon but making a concerted effort to lend the building the requested Arab style.

Why the Alhambresque?

The choice of the alhambresque as a style suitable for the decoration of a royal palace was not new; the style can also be found in the Alhambra room of the

Palacio Real de Aranjuez near Madrid (by Rafael Contreras, 1848)⁶⁵ and in Alexandra Fyodorovna’s bathroom at the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg (by Alexander Pavlovich Brjullof, 1839; see fig. 1).⁶⁶ On one level, the alhambresque was simply a logical extension of contemporary European eclecticism, demonstrating the extent to which the sultan looked to Europe—and Paris in particular—for direction in fashion and taste. In Istanbul, as in Saint Petersburg and London, the alhambresque was a set of motifs and individual elements—*sebka*, *muqarnas*, neo-Nasrid capitals—that could lend an otherwise European-style building an “Arab” style.

But on another level, the alhambresque was used very self-consciously by the late Ottoman rulers as part of the reinvention of an idyllic Ottoman past in a rapidly changing (and increasingly westernized) present. In Istanbul it was considered a legitimate style for serious architectural subjects. The sponsorship of the rebuilding of Owen Jones’s Alhambra pavilion at Sydenham Crystal Palace by both the khedive and the sultan suggests that they felt a sense of ownership for the Alhambra or saw it as a common heritage. By adopting a style that both Ottomans and Europeans clearly understood as Islamic in origin, they were subverting the Orientalist fantasies of their European counterparts by situating the alhambresque not in bathhouses or smoking rooms but in monumental facades and palace structures. Alhambresque was both Europeanized enough for Westerners to understand its references and Islamic enough to satisfy the desire of the late Ottoman rulers to display themselves as the inheritors of a glorious Islamic civilization. It is no accident that both the Beylerbeyi and Gezira Palaces were completed in time to house the French empress and her entourage on visits—visits that were represented in prints, drawings, and written descriptions across the European press. The Ottoman world was displaying itself to Europe and all the Muslim world in an architectural language that its own people and foreigners alike would not fail to understand.

Nostalgia: East versus West

Scholars have suggested that a sense of nostalgia for the caliphate in al-Andalus might explain the nineteenth-century rise of the alhambresque style in Muslim countries.⁶⁷ Danby, in exploring Moorish architecture in the nineteenth century, highlights what he perceives as a Muslim nostalgia for al-Andalus.⁶⁸ He adopts the term “Andalus Syndrome,” coined by Akbar Ahmed in his book *Discovering Islam*, to identify the feeling. Ahmed describes this “syndrome” as “a yearning for a past that is dead but will not be buried, a fear of an unreliable future which is still to be born,” which he ascribes to the societal trauma caused by the abrupt ending of the Muslim civilization in al-Andalus.⁶⁹ Robert Irwin in his book about the Alhambra writes that “from the nineteenth century onwards, the Alhambra did indeed become a place of pilgrimage for Arabs who mourned the vanished glories of Islam and the caliphate.”⁷⁰

Certainly, al-Andalus and the palace of the Alhambra were used by historians and journalists as bywords for a lost age of tolerance or a lost Muslim paradise.⁷¹

In the West, nostalgia colored the lens through which artists and writers viewed the palace. Mariam Rosser-Owen describes the urge in the West to re-create the look and feel of the Alhambra as a kind of “ostentatious nostalgia,” and clearly, the literature, music, and artistic depictions of the palace in the West usually depict its glories as part of this supposed lost golden age.⁷² For example, the Alhambra featured prominently as a place of declining power and regret in Western nostalgic operas and musical compositions—*Boabdil der letzte Maurenkönig* by Moritz Moszkowski (Berlin and Leipzig, first published in 1892), *Les Abencérages* by Luigi Cherubini (1813), *L'esule di Granata* by Giacomo Meyerbeer (first performed in Milan in 1822), *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* by Francisco Tárrega (Paris, 1880s).

Among Muslims, too, there was a certain political nostalgia for al-Andalus, and specifically for Córdoba, as a site of former Muslim power in Europe. Alexander Elinson has explored how, even during the period of Islamic rule in Spain and shortly thereafter, Andalusian authors wrote poetic and historical literature with a sense of nostalgia for the caliphate and, in particular, idealized Madinat al-Zahra, the palace-city built near Córdoba in the tenth century.⁷³

But al-Andalus was more frequently described in Arabic literature as a place of jihad, historical battles, and wonders.⁷⁴ In the many Arabic accounts of the history of al-Andalus and the several descriptions of diplomatic visits, the tendency was to describe the Islamic history of the region and its Christian conquest in a factual, descriptive voice without the tone of loss, regret, and mournfulness that was present in Western histories of the region from the eighteenth century.⁷⁵ That tone is only present in Arabic descriptions of the Alhambra from the early twentieth century.⁷⁶

By the late Ottoman period there was certainly an awareness of the romantic history associated with al-Andalus—above all, through publications and theatrical performances. Ibrahim Edhem Pasha, Ottoman politician and the producer of *Usul*, completed the first Ottoman translation of Louis Viardot’s *Histoire des Arabes et des Mores d’Espagne* (1851), which was published in 1859–63.⁷⁷ Al-Andalus was the theme of five popular theatrical plays by Abdülhak Hamid, including *Tarik Yahut Endülüs’ün Fethi* (Tarik; or, The Conquest of Spain, 1879), *Tezer Yahut Abdurrahman-i Salis* (Tezer; or, Abdurrahman III, 1880), and *Ibn Musa* (1927)—romantic stories of cross-cultural love and dilemmas that featured al-Andalus as the setting for an idealized Muslim society. In Cairo in 1880, the students of the Coptic Charitable Society’s school put on a play entitled *Al-Malik al-Mansur*, about the chamberlain of al-Andalus during the Umayyad caliphate, for an audience that included the khedive and the governor of Alexandria.⁷⁸ But crucially, the Alhambra, and the themes of nostalgia that so often accompanied it in the West, was not yet a focus in the literary and musical culture of the late Ottoman world.⁷⁹ In a study of the theme of al-Andalus in the Arabic novel, William Granara situates the beginning of this type of nostalgia at the turn of the twentieth century, noting the publication of Jurji Zaydan’s novel *Sharl wa ‘Abd al-Rahman* in 1904. It was written during the height of the Arab Renaissance (*al-Nahda*) and the beginnings of pan-Arab nationalism.⁸⁰

Conclusions

This article has highlighted a theme in architectural and design history that tends to be overlooked—the theme of the exotic and the Oriental within the non-Western context. In the West the reinterpretation of the Alhambra in buildings and interiors satisfied a European taste for the exotic and a deeply romantic nostalgia that was associated with a foreign and lost golden age. To a certain extent, the alhambresque in the Ottoman context can be interpreted as a local domestication of this Western Orientalism.⁸¹

But, as I have indicated, the different interpretations of the alhambresque in non-Western contexts are evidence that there the alhambresque was not an unthinking adoption from the West but a knowing and deliberate use of the style for a variety of complex reasons. Outside Europe the alhambresque represented an absorption of European practices, true, but it also represented a self-conscious manipulation of a historic style associated with an idealized Islamic past in an attempt to create a visual sense of continuity with the contemporary.

The creation and adoption of the alhambresque is just one trend in a long history of the reworking and reconfiguration of buildings from the East by the West and their subsequent reuse and reinterpretation in non-Western contexts. In the case of the alhambresque we see a more complex picture of the late nineteenth-century Islamic world and its adoption of design styles than is usually portrayed: the West was not the only actor.

■

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1 See in particular the chapter “Moorish Style” in Mariam Rosser-Owen, *Islamic Arts from Spain* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 2010). Also see Juan Calatrava Escobar, “La Alhambra y el orientalismo arquitectónico,” in Angel Isac Martínez de Carvajal, ed., *El manifiesto de la Alhambra: 50 años después; El monumento y la arquitectura contemporánea* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 2006), 11–69; John Sweetman, *The Oriental Obsession: Islamic Inspiration in British and American Art and Architecture, 1500–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Miles Danby, *Moorish Style* (London: Phaidon Press, 1995); Michael Darby, *The Islamic Perspective: An Aspect of British Architecture and Design in the 19th Century* (London: Leighton House Gallery, 1983); Juan Calatrava Escobar, Mariam Rosser-Owen, Abraham Thomas, and Rémi Labrusse, *Owen Jones y la Alhambra* (Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, 2011).

2 Owen Jones, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra, from Drawings Taken on the Spot in 1834 by the Late M. Jules Goury and in 1834 and 1837 by Owen Jones, Archt. With a Complete Translation of the Arabic Inscriptions, and an Historical Notice of the Kings of Granada, from the Conquest of That City by the Arabs to the Expulsion of the Moors*, by Mr. Pasqual Gayangos, 2 vols. (London: Owen Jones, 1842–45); Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, 3 vols. (London: Day and Son, 1856).

3 Darby, *Islamic Perspective*, 87. The room was designed by August de Montferrand and restored by Alexander Brjullov around 1839.

4 Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

5 Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 768–96. Makdisi summarizes Ottoman Orientalism as “the Ottoman engagement with and internalization of an entrenched European discourse of Orientalism” (772).

6 Turgut Saner, “Orientalism in Architecture,” in Ayşen Anadol, ed., *1001 Faces of Orientalism*, exhib. cat. (Istanbul: Sakip Sabanci Müzesi, 2013), 59. The School of Architecture was a department of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts (Sanayi-i Nefise Mekteb-i Alisi), which was founded in Istanbul in 1881 under the leadership of Osman Hamdi Bey. Students could study painting, sculpture, and architecture in three- and four-year courses. The School of Architecture opened in 1883 under the direction of architect Alexandre Vallaury, who was head of architecture from 1883 to 1908. See Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 152–53. Also see Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, “Urban Texture and Architectural Styles after the Tanzimat,” in Lorans Tanatar Baruh and Vangelis Kechriotis, eds., *Economy and Society on Both Shores of the Aegean* (Athens: Alphabank, 2010), 487–527.

7 Diana Barillari and Ezio Godoli, *Istanbul 1900—Art Nouveau Architecture and Interiors* (Florence: Rizzoli, 1996), 52.

8 Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World’s Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 143.

9 Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” 768–96.

10 There is no equivalent Arabic term for “moorish/mauresque” which conveys the same historical connotations; although “muriski” is found in Arabic to refer to the Moors of al-Andalus, it is a transliteration of the French. I am grateful to Ramzi Rouighi for discussing this with me.

11 See Danby, *Moorish Style*, 13. See also John Sweetman and A. R. Garner, “Moorish Style,” *Grove Art Online*: “Term used specifically in the 19th century to describe a Western style based on the architecture and decorative arts of the Muslim inhabitants (the Moors) of north-west Africa and (between 8th and 15th centuries) of southern Spain; it is often used imprecisely to include Arab and Indian influences” (updated 2010; accessed April 9, 2014). See Pascual de Gayangos, *Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* (London: Charles Knight & Co., 1839), 15: 381–90, for a nineteenth-century definition of “Moorish architecture.” The word “moresque” was in use by the sixteenth century, when it is found in pattern books such as Jean de Gourmont’s *Livre de moresque* (Lyon, 1546) and Peter Flötner’s *Maureskenbuch* (Zurich, 1549), but it seems to be interchangeable with “arabesque” at this stage; “moreschi” is interchangeable with “arabesque” (“rabeschi”) in Giovanni Antonio Tagliente’s textile pattern book *Essempi di recammi* (Venice, 1527). See Sweetman, *Oriental Obsession*, 258 n. 23.

12 Jones, *Grammar of Ornament*, 96.

13 Danby, *Moorish Style*, 14.

14 Alhambresque style and Moorish style are not mutually exclusive. In the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris, the Spanish pavilion was a mix of Moorish styles with alhambresque features. An alternative term is the “international Alhambra style,” used in Rosser-Owen, *Islamic Arts from Spain*, 126.

15 Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Manette Salomon* (Paris, 1867), 200.

16 The “Alhambresque” furnishing fabric of woven silk, 1850s, Victoria and Albert Museum inventory number T.132-1972, a piece of jacquard-woven silk made by the London weaver Daniel Keith & Co., was inspired by designs from Jones’s 1856 edition of *The Grammar of Ornament*. The weaver probably took the designs from Jones’s “Turkish No. 1” panel (plate XXXVI) rather than his “Moresque” plates, but the naming of an upholstery textile after its association with the palace reflects the popularity of the Alhambra style by this time. However, it is not clear exactly when the textile came to be known as “Alhambresque”—whether it was given the title by the weaver in the 1850s or by Warner & Sons, which acquired the records of the firm in 1894. The acquisitions register at the Victoria and Albert does not give any indication. See the description by Wendy Hefford in Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson, eds., *A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, cat. 17 (London: Victoria and Albert Publications with the Baltimore Museum of Art, 1997), http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/1159_grand_design/images.php. My thanks to Mariam Rosser-Owen for highlighting the Victoria and Albert Museum acquisitions register for this object.

17 For more on the creation of the Alhambra as a tourist destination, see Marianne Magdalena de Klerk, “Historicizing the Landscape: Recovering the Aesthetics of the Alhambra,” PhD diss. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001).

18 Further details of literary and artistic representation of the Alhambra are outlined by Lara

Eggleton in “History in the Making: The Ornaments of the Alhambra and the Past-Facing Present,” *Art Historiography* 6 (June 2012). See also Sophie Makariou, “L’Alhambra, de l’histoire des arts aux reveries décoratives,” in Rémi Labrusse, ed., *Purs décors? Arts de l’Islam, regards du XIXe siècle collections des arts décoratifs* (Paris: Musée du Louvre Éditions, 2007), 268–75.

19 It was Schack whom the German banker Arthur von Gwinner cited as the main inspiration for his first visit to the Alhambra in the 1880s in his *Lebenserinnerungen*, ed. Manfred Pohl (Frankfurt am Main: Fritz Knapp Verlag, 1975). Gwinner subsequently purchased the Palacio del Partal, one of the Alhambra palaces, in 1888, from which he brought the carved wooden Nasrid cupola to his villa in Berlin, where he set it into a specially built tower. In his memoirs he recalls thinking about Schack’s text while standing under the cupola, now in Berlin, dreaming of the romantic view he had from the mirador when it was in the Alhambra and of the friends he made while he lived there.

20 Washington Irving, *The Alhambra: A Series of Tales and Sketches of the Moors and Spaniards* (Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1832), republished as *Tales of the Alhambra* (New York: George Putnam, 1851).

21 Jones, *Plans, Elevations, Sections*; Jones, *Grammar of Ornament*.

22 Tonia Raquejo, “La Alhambra en el Museo Victoria and Albert: Un catálogo de las piezas de la Alhambra y de algunas obras neonazaries,” *Cuadernos de arte e iconografía* 1, no. 1 (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1988), 201–44. In 1868 many European countries signed the Convention for Promoting the Universal Reproductions of Works of Art for the Benefit of Museums of All Countries to allow for the sharing of copies and plaster casts, including casts of the Alhambra palace.

23 For the Jones court, see Matthew Digby Wyatt, *Views of the Crystal Palace and Park, Sydenham* (London: Day, 1854). The Diebitsch “Maurische Kiosk” exhibited in the Prussian section of the 1867 exposition in Paris was eventually bought by the Bavarian king, Ludwig II, for his Linderhof Palace in Bavaria. See *Illustrierte Zeitung*, July 27, 1867, p. 68, reproduced in Elke Pflugradt-Abdelaziz, “A Proposal by the Architect Carl von Diebitsch (1819–69): Mudejar Architecture for a Global Civilization,” in N. Oulebsir and Mercedes Volait, eds., *L’orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoirs* (Paris: INHA, 2009), plate 6 and p. 86 n. 24.

24 See C. Gere, *Nineteenth Century Interiors: An Album of Watercolours* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 88; and Gere, “Smoking Rooms,” in J. Banham, ed., *Encyclopedia of Interior Design* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), 1187–89.

25 Claudia Heide, “The Alhambra in Britain: Between Foreignization and Domestication,” *Art in Translation* (Special Issue on Translation and Visual Culture) 2, no. 2 (July 2010): 219.

26 André Raymond, *Cairo* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), esp. 309–38.

27 Robert Ilbert and Mercedes Volait, “Neo Arabic Renaissance in Egypt,” *Mimar*, no. 13 (1984): 26–34. See also Ghislaine Alleaume and Mercedes Volait, “The Age of Transition: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,” in André Raymond, ed., *The Glory of Cairo: An Illustrated History* (Cairo: AUC Press, 2002), 361–64, esp. 370–93.

28 See Mercedes Volait, “La question urbanistique,” in *Architectes et architectures de l’Égypte moderne (1830–1950): Genèse et essor d’une expertise locale* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2005), 81–156.

29 For a vivid description of the festivities to mark the opening of the Suez Canal and its context, see Trevor Mostyn, *Egypt’s Belle Époque, Cairo, 1869–1952* (London: Quartet Books, 1989).

30 Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 145–51.

31 Khedive Isma’il, quoted by Mr. de Leon in “The Khedive’s Egypt,” *The Spectator*, September 8, 1877, p. 17, archive.spectator.co.uk.

32 Kathryn Ferry, “Owen Jones and the Alhambra Court at the Crystal Palace,” in Mariam Rosser-Owen and Glaire Anderson, eds., *Revisiting al-Andalus: Perspectives on the Material Culture of Islamic Iberia and Beyond* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 245.

33 Elke Pflugradt-Abdelaziz, *A Proposal by the Architect Carl von Diebitsch* (Paris, 2009), 76; Pflugradt-Abdelaziz, “Die Pruessische Palast in Ägypten,” *125 Jahre Sueskanal: Lauchhammers Eisenguss am Nil* (Olms: Hrsg. W. G. Schwantz, Hildesheim, 1998), 55–77.

34 Mercedes Volait, *Fous du Caire: Excentriques, architects et amateurs d’art en Égypte 1863–1914* (Montpellier: L’Archange Minotaure, 2009), 202–3. These works were prefabricated in cast iron in Germany and shipped to Egypt. The buildings do not survive today, but there are drawings held by the Architekturmuseum of the Technische Universität Berlin that show the mausoleum as an octagonal construction with a veranda-like columned hall in iron topped with a polygonal dome. It is not too far stylistically from the “Moorish temple” built in Potsdam between 1792 and 1794 and the “Alhambra” pavilion in London’s Kew Gardens (1758), both of which were no doubt known to Diebitsch. Elke Pflugradt-Abdelaziz, “Orientalism as an Economic Strategy: The Architect Carl von Diebitsch in Cairo (1862–1869),” in Mercedes Volait, ed., *Le Caire-Alexandrie: Architectures européennes 1850–1950*, Etudes urbaines 5 (Cairo: Presses de l’IFAO, 2001).

35 The collection of furniture by Carl von Diebitsch is at the Staatliches Museum Schwerin in Schwerin, Germany, at www.museum-schwerin.de; Antje Martha Fischer, “Der Traum vom Orient,” *Arsproto* 2 (2011): 32–35. This collection of furniture is exhibited in the rooms of a former “Moorish bath” (1857) at Schwerin Castle, which Diebitsch designed together with its furniture in an alhambresque style for Grand Duke Friedrich Franz II (neither the bath nor the original furniture survives).

36 *Illustrated London News*, 1856, p. 537.

37 *Builder*, May 9, 1874, p. 385.

38 Calatrava et al. *Owen Jones y la Alhambra*. See also Carol Hrvol Flores, *Owen Jones* (New York: Rizzolli, 2006).

39 Hrvol Flores, *Owen Jones*, 191.

40 Cited in Shirley Johnston, *Egyptian Palaces and Villas: Pashas, Khedives and Kings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2006), 43–46.

41 Mercedes Volait, “Figures locales de la ‘Médiévalisation’ du Caire,” in Volait, *Fous du Caire*, esp. 202.

42 Mercedes Volait, “Un architecte face à l’Orient: Antoine Lasciac (1856–1946),” in Jean-Claude Vatin, ed., *La fuite en Égypte: Supplément aux voyages européens en orient* (Cairo: CEDEJ, 1989), 265–73.

43 Ilbert and Volait, “Neo Arabic Renaissance in Egypt,” 34.

44 Feliz Yenişehirlioğlu, “Continuity and Change in 19th Century Istanbul,” in Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit, eds., *Islamic Art in the 19th Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 66.

45 Emre Araci, “European Music at the Ottoman Court,” in Anadol, *1001 Faces of Orientalism*, 105.

46 Ferry, “Owen Jones and the Alhambra Court, 245; Mercedes Volait, “Appropriating Orientalism? Saber Sabri’s Mamluk Revivals in Late 19th Century Cairo,” in Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit, eds., *Islamic Art in the 19th Century: Tradition, Innovation, and Eclecticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 140.

47 See Ussama Makdisi, “Rethinking Ottoman Imperialism: Modernity, Violence and the Cultural Logic of Ottoman Reform,” in Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp, and Stefan Weber, eds., *The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg, 2002).

48 Cited in Barillari and Godoli, *Istanbul 1900*. See also Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 49–50.

49 Barillari and Godoli, *Istanbul 1900*, introduction.

50 At the time, there was no specific architectural education in the equivalent of art academies in the Ottoman world. An Ottoman architect was recognized as such by his employment by or license granted by the Office of Royal Architects (Hassa Mimarları Ocağı), and the route to becoming an architect was through a military or administrative education that emphasized practical experience rather than a theoretical knowledge of architectural aesthetics. See Gülsüm Nabantoğlu, “The Birth of an Aesthetic Discourse in Ottoman Architecture,” *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture* 8, no. 2 (1988): 114–22.

51 See note 6.

52 [Victor] Marie de Launay, et al., eds., *Usul-i Mi’mari-i ‘osmani / L’architecture ottomane / Die ottomanische Baukunst* (Istanbul: Imprimerie et Lithographie Centrales, 1873). The Turkish Ministry of Culture published a reprint of the volume in 1998, with translations in modern Turkish and English: *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Mimarisi / Ottoman Architecture*, with English translation by Robert Bragner (Istanbul: Tarihi Araştırmalar ve Dokümantasyon Merkezleri Kurma ve Geliştirme Vakfı).

53 See Ahmet A. Ersoy, “Architecture and the Search for Ottoman Origins in the Tanzimat Period,” in *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 117–39. Also see Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary: Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire* (Farnham, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press, 2015). I am grateful to Ahmet Ersoy for letting me read an advance copy of his book.

54 Ahmet A. Ersoy, “Ottoman Gothic: Evocations of the Medieval Past in Late Ottoman Architecture,” in Patrick J. Geary and Gábor Klaniczay, eds., *Manufacturing Middle Ages: Entangled History of Medievalism in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 223–25.

55 Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 140–41.

56 Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, in “Continuity and Change in 19th Century Istanbul,” 73, suggests that Bourgeois might have been responsible for the first introduction of the Owen Jones motifs into the imperial buildings of Istanbul, since Jones’s work was so well known in Paris, where Bourgeois trained. However, the Balyan brothers also trained in Paris in the 1840s and were well connected with contemporary Parisian fashions, which indicates that Jones’s alhambresque motifs were probably widespread by this time.

57 Turgut Saner, “A 19th Century Interpretation of Çinili Köşk (Istanbul) in an Orientalist Manner,” in *Art turc / Turkish Art* (Geneva: Fondation Max Van Berchem, 1999), 615–23.

58 Ersoy, “Ottoman Gothic,” 219–20. In tracing the medieval historicism in Ottoman culture of the late nineteenth century, Ersoy argues that revising an idealized medieval past provided both a comforting escape from the realities of the rapid changes of the late nineteenth-century Ottoman world and a means by which the state could consolidate a changing vision of Ottoman identity within an ethnically diverse empire. The mélange of eclectic forms from many diverse styles claiming “authenticity” as sources of the Ottoman tradition were, he argues, “informed by imperial politics of identity, stipulations of international rivalry, diplomatic tact, as well as the dictates of current global fashion.”

59 Pars Tuğlaci, *The Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture* (Istanbul: Yeni Çigir Bookstore, 1990), 418.

60 As reported in the *Daily Alta California*, November 21, 1869, p. 1, accessed at the California Digital Newspaper Collection, cdnc.ucr.edu.

61 The interior of the rebuilt palace was destroyed in 1910 by a devastating fire that left only the outer walls intact. The palace has since been renovated as a modern Orientalist-style hotel; it is

owned by the Kempinski chain. What we know about the interior comes from preliminary drawings of the palace by Balyan published in Pars Tuğlaci’s *Role of the Balian Family in Ottoman Architecture* in 1990. Tuğlaci’s descriptions of the palaces come from research in Ottoman archives, including the Noubarian library in Paris and the Department of Antiquities Archives in Yerevan, Armenia.

62 According to Feliz Yenişchirlioğlu, in “Continuity and Change in 19th Century Istanbul,” “The members of the Balyan family were in direct contact with Paris and were well aware of the contemporary architectural styles then current in Europe” (66).

63 Tuğlaci, *Role of the Balian Family*, 318. Tuğlaci provides no source for this command for a palace in “Arab” style, however.

64 On Hakob Balyan, see Tuğlaci, *Role of the Balian Family*, 318. See also Alyson Wharton, *The Architects of Ottoman Constantinople: The Balyan Family and the History of Ottoman Architecture* (London: I. B.Tauris, 2015).

65 Nieves Panadero Peropadre, “Recuerdos de la Alhambra: Rafael Contreras y el gabinete árabe del Palacio Real de Aranjuez,” *Reales sitios: Revista del patrimonio nacional* 122 (1994): 33–40.

66 Militsa Filipovna Korshunova, *The Winter Palace, St. Petersburg*, with a preface by Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky (Paris: Alain de Gourcuff, 1994), 16.

67 Rosser-Owen, *Islamic Arts from Spain*, 130; Robert Irwin, *Alhambra* (London: Profile Books, 2004), 181.

68 Danby, *Moorish Style*, 13.

69 Akbar Ahmed, *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1998), 160.

70 Irwin, *Alhambra*, 181.

71 Pedro Martínez Montávez, *Al-Andalus, España, en la literatura árabe contemporánea: La casa del pasado* (Madrid: Editorial Mapfre, 1992).

72 Rosser-Owen, *Islamic Arts from Spain*, 128. See also Cynthia Robinson, “Marginal Ornament: Poetics, Mimesis and Devotion in the Palace of the Lions,” *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 189.

73 Alexander E. Elinson, *Looking Back at al-Andalus: The Poetics of Loss and Nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). See also Ann Christys, “Picnic at Madinat al-Zahra,” in Simon Barton and Peter Linehan, eds., *Cross, Crescent and Conversion: Studies on Medieval Spain and Christendom in Memory of Richard Fletcher* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 87–108.

74 Justin Stearns, “Representing and Remembering al-Andalus: Some Historical Considerations Regarding the End of Time and the Making of Nostalgia,” *Medieval Encounters* 15 (2009): 355–74, esp. 360–63.

75 Nabil Matar, “Spain through Arab Eyes c. 1573–1691,” in Kumkum Chatterjee and Clement Lawes, eds., *Europe Observed: Multiple Gazes in Early Modern Encounters* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2008), 123–43.

76 On the subject of Spain through Arab eyes, see Henri Pèrès, *L’Espagne vue par les voyageurs musulmans de 1610 à 1930* (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1937); Nieves Paradela Alonso, *El otro laberinto español: Viajeros árabes a España entre el s. XVII y 1936* (Madrid: Ediciones de la UAM, 1993); Martínez Montávez, *Al-Andalus*; Elinson, *Looking Back at al-Andalus*.

77 Louis Viardot, *Histoire des Arabes et des Mores d’Espagne*, 2 vols. (Paris: Pagnerre, 1851). The Turkish translation, by Edhem Pasha and the poet and Young Ottoman activist Ziya Pasha, was published under the title *Endülüs Tarihi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Takvimhane-i Amire, 1276–80 AH [1859–63]). See Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary*, chap. 2.

78 P. C. Sadgrove, *The Egyptian Theatre in the Nineteenth Century (1799–1882)* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1996), 149.

79 Not until the emergence of Arab nationalist narratives in the first quarter of the twentieth century, after the alhambresque had already begun to fall out of fashion, did the Alhambra become a locus for nostalgic descriptions in Arabic literary, musical, and artistic culture. Michael Frischkopf traces the origins of themes and sounds from al-Andalus to the rise of Arab nationalisms in the mid-twentieth century: see Michael Frischkopf, “Some Meanings of the Spanish Tinge in Contemporary Egyptian Music,” in Goffredo Plastino, ed., *Mediterranean Mosaic: Popular Music and Global Sounds* (New York: Routledge, 2003). I am grateful to Professor Owen Wright for his comments on this. The Tunisian musical tradition of *ma’luf* and the Moroccan musical tradition of *al-ala* incorporated certain Andalusian elements and evolved from that tradition, but the Tunisian and Moroccan claims for Andalusian identity are probably more ideological than musicological. For Arab writers the Alhambra came to represent both the height of Arab civilization in al-Andalus and the moment of its apparent decline, the place where Arab rule in western Europe had ended—a view that was undoubtedly influenced by the Western romantic view of the Alhambra as a place of ruin and decline. The first translation into Arabic of François-René Chateaubriand’s 1826 romantic tale of thwarted love between an exiled Moor returning to Granada after the conquest of the city and a Christian lady of noble birth, *Les aventures du dernier Abencérage*, was made by Shakib Arslán (1870–1946) and published in 1897 (reprinted in 1925): see Nieves Paradela Alonso, “El viaje y la historia: El mito de al-Ándalus en los modernos viajeros árabes a España,” *Revista de filología románica* 4 (2006): 256. The Egyptian poet Ahmad Shawqi (1868–1932) wrote his well-known poem “Al-Rihlah ila al-Andalus”

(The Journey to al-Andalus) following his return from a five-year exile in Spain in 1919, a vital year in the development of national consciousness in Egypt. The poem associates Shawqi’s homeland of Egypt and his youth there with al-Andalus and its monuments in a tone of nostalgia for a bygone age: see Yasmeen Noorani, “The Lost Garden of al-Andalus: Islamic Spain and the Poetic Inversion of Colonialism,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31, no. 2 (May 1999): 237–54. Ahmed Zaki (d. 1934) visited Spain in 1893 and was, according to Pedro Martínez Montávez, crucial in developing the topos of al-Andalus as a “lost paradise” in an Arabic context: see Martínez Montávez, *Al-Andalus*, 26–27.

80 William Granara, “Nostalgia, Arab Nationalism and the Andalusian Chronotype in the Evolution of the Modern Arabic Novel,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* 36, no. 1 (2005): 57–73, esp. 63–65.

81 Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” 768–96.